

Element Type: Artwork

Code: A-12

Element: Driving of the Golden Spike Mural

Location: Northwest dome frieze

Theme/Message:

Description:

15' x 25' oil-on-canvas mural mounted on dome frieze

The joining of the rails at Promontory Summit, May 10, 1869

Background Information:

Designed by Utah artist Lee Greene Richards, the friezes of the dome also feature historical scenes, each measured fifteen by twenty-five feet: During the Depression years under the auspices of the WPA, four artists, Lee Greene Richards, Gordon Cope, Henry Rasmussen, and Waldo Midgeley recorded the history of Utah in murals in the rotunda area.

The murals were set in place in January 1935 and by that time included the work of Richards, Gordon Cope and Henry Rasmussen, all Utah artists. The murals filled the 200 foot barrel of the dome, each placed in spandrels which measured forty-five feet at the top and eleven feet at the bottom. Four hundred feet of two foot wide canvas was used and seven hundred feet of bordering and lettering was necessary for framing the murals.¹²⁵ According to the Deseret News the paintings were put in place, "in the same manner that canvas or paper is pasted on a wall." Taylor Woolley, building architect and student of Frank Lloyd Wright, oversaw the work. Waldo Midgley designed and executed the borders and lettering. Ranch Kimball assisted during the first few weeks of the painting. Installation was completed by the end of February.



Governor Henry H. Blood officially received the art work for the state of Utah in 10 March 1935 from William T. Iglehart, representing Robert H. Hinckley, Utah director of the Fera, the federal agency working with the civil works administration providing the funds for the work. Blood said, "I take the greatest pleasure in accepting this splendid work as a permanent addition to the beauty of one of the finest capitol buildings in the United States." Igleheart said, "These murals are presented to the state of Utah as the achievement of the national vision which created the great public works of art project under the Civil Works Administration. Completion and installation of these decorative historical paintings mark the culmination of what has been termed the most important cultural project every undertaken by the federal government."



Element Type: Artwork

Code: A-13

Element: Advent of Irrigation Mural

Location: Northwest dome frieze

Theme/Message:

Beginnings of irrigation in the Salt Lake Valley by Mormon Pioneers

Description:

15' x 25' oil-on-canvas mural mounted on dome frieze

Background Information:

See background information page A-12.



Element Type: Artwork

Code: A-14

Element: Peace With the Indians Mural

Location: Northeast dome frieze

Theme/Message:

Treaty for peace between early Utah Indians and Mormon Pioneers

Description:

15' x 25' oil-on-canvas mural mounted on dome frieze

Background Information:

See background information A-12.



Element Type: Artwork

Code: A-15

Element: Pony Express/Stagecoach Mural

Location: Northeast dome frieze

Theme/Message:

Commemorating the Pony Express and stagecoach transportation through Utah in the 1860s

Description:

15' x 25' oil-on-canvas mural mounted on dome frieze

Background Information:

See background information page A-12.



Element Type: Artwork

Code: A-16

Element: Reclaiming the Desert Mural

Location: East lunette

Theme/Message:

Early Utah Mormon Pioneer life

Description:

Large mural painted on lunette



Element Type: Artwork

Code: A-17

Element: Connor & Mining Mural

Location: Southeast dome frieze

Theme/Message:

Discovery of silver near Park City in 1860s

Description:

15' x 25' oil-on-canvas mural mounted on dome frieze

Background Information:

See background information page A-12.



Element Type: Artwork

Code: A-18

Element: Naming Ensign Peak Mural

Location: Southeast dome frieze

Theme/Message:

Commemorating meeting by Brigham Young and other leaders on Ensign Peak in July 1847

Description:

15' x 25' oil-on-canvas mural mounted on dome frieze

Background Information:

See background information page A-12.



Element Type: Artwork

Code: A-19

Element: Social Gathering in the Bowery Mural

Location: Southwest dome frieze

Theme/Message:

Early pioneer social life in Salt Lake Valley

Description:

15' x 25' oil-on-canvas mural mounted on dome frieze

Background Information:

See background information page A-12.



Element Type: Artwork

Code: A-20

Element: Seagulls and Crops Mural

Location: Southwest dome frieze

Theme/Message:

Commemorating the saving by seagulls of the pioneers' crops from cricket infestation in 1848

Description:

15' x 25' oil-on-canvas mural mounted on dome frieze

Background Information:

See background information page A-12.



Element Type: Artwork

Code: A-21

Element: Clouds and Seagulls Dome Mural

Location: Dome

Theme/Message:

Commemorating the Utah state bird

Description:

Large mural painted on dome

Background Information:

In 1969, Alvin Gittins, Utah artist climbed a scaffolding during the cleaning and repainting of the capitol interior, to assess the damage done over time to the ceiling seagulls which appeared to be badly in need of a cleaning.¹³³ Alfred E. Lippold Co., of Salt Lake City, repainted the inside of the capitol dome from 160 foot high steel scaffolding for \$80,000. They painted all interior hall walls and ceilings as well as the inside of the dome.¹³⁴ They lowered the chandelier twenty feet to complete the project which made it possible to better view the brass eagles at the top of the chandelier.¹³⁵

